

Message Text

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ACTION EUR-12

INFO OCT-01 IO-13 ISO-00 PA-01 PRS-01 USIA-06 EB-08
L-03 CIAE-00 INR-07 NSAE-00 SS-15 SP-02 NSC-05
DHA-05 MCT-01 H-01 INSE-00 JUSE-00 /081 W
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R 261421Z OCT 77
FM AMEMBASSY MOSCOW
TO SECSTATE WASHDC 3774
INFO AMEMBASSY BERLIN
USMISSION BERLIN
AMEMBASSY BELGRADE
AMEMBASSY BONN
AMEMBASSY BUCHAREST
AMEMBASSY BUDAPEST
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BELGRADE ALSO FOR USDEL CSCE

E.O. 11652: N/A
TAGS: PINS, UR, US
SUBJECT: MFA PRESS CONFERENCE ON BRAZINSKAS CASE

REF: MOSCOW 15564

1. A PRESS CONFERENCE WAS HELD MONDAY, OCTOBER 24
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(REFTEL), AT THE HOUSE OF JOURNALISTS, AT WHICH
OFFICIALS AND PERSONNEL OF THE UKRAINIAN CIVIL AVIATION
ADMINISTRATION DEMANDED THE EXTRADITION OF THE BRAZINSKAS
FATHER AND SON, TO THE SOVIET UNION. THERE WERE ABOUT
150 PEOPLE PRESENT, BOTH SOVIET AND FOREIGN, INCLUDING
JOURNALISTS FROM UPI, REUTERS, AFP AND AP. THE
PROCEEDINGS WERE TELEVISED. VALENTIN ANDREYEVICH

KHAZOV, A DEPUTY CHIEF IN THE MFA PRESS DEPARTMENT, ACTED AS HOST. HE INTRODUCED THE PEOPLE ON THE DAIS: THE PILOT AND CO-PILOT OF THE HIJACKED PLANE, A STEWARDESS, TWO CIVILIANS AND A REPRESENTATIVE OF THE SOVIET WOMEN'S COMMITTEE. THEY ANSWERED QUESTIONS, WHICH HAD TO BE WRITTEN OUT AND SUBMITTED IN ADVANCE. ONE QUESTION WAS WHY THE WHITE HOUSE REPLY TO THE LETTER FROM THE PLANE'S PILOT AND CO-PILOT WAS CONSIDERED UNSATISFACTORY. THE ANSWER WAS THAT THE WHITE HOUSE EVADED RESPONSIBILITY BY SAYING THAT THE DECISION WAS UP TO THE IMMIGRATION AND NATURALIZATION SERVICE. COPIES OF THE FOLLOWING DOCUMENTS WERE HANDED OUT AT THE PRESS CONFERENCE: THE LETTER FROM THE PILOT AND CO-PILOT TO PRESIDENT CARTER DATED MARCH 23, 1977; THE WHITE HOUSE REPLY, DATED APRIL 27, 1977; A LETTER APPEAL ADDRESSED TO THE PRESIDENT FROM FLIGHT SERVICE PERSONNEL OF THE UKRAINIAN CIVIL AVIATION ADMINISTRATION, DATED OCTOBER 5, 1977; A STATEMENT BY THE CENTRAL COMMITTEE OF THE TRADE UNION OF AVIATION PERSONNEL ON THE QUESTION OF THE STRUGGLE AGAINST AIR PIRACY, DATED OCTOBER 24, 1977; AND A SPEECH BY B. YE. PANYUKOV, MEMBER OF THE COLLEGIUM OF THE MINISTRY OF CIVIL AVIATION, DIRECTOR OF ADMINISTRATION. (COPIES OF ALL ARE BEING POUCHED TO EUR/SOV.)

2. OUR INFORMAL TRANSLATION OF TEXT OF THE OCTOBER 5 LETTER TO THE LIMITED OFFICIAL USE

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PRESIDENT FOLLOWS (WE OBTAINED COPY FROM US NEWSMAN; ORIGINAL HAS NOT AS YET BEEN RECEIVED BY EMBASSY):

BEGIN TEXT:

MISTER PRESIDENT*

WE, FLIGHT SERVICE PERSONNEL OF THE UKRAINIAN CIVIL AVIATION ADMINISTRATION, ADDRESS THIS LETTER TO YOU, BOTH AS HEAD OF STATE AND AS THE FATHER OF FOUR CHILDREN.

ON OCTOBER 15, 1970 A VERY GRAVE CRIME WAS COMMITTED ON BOARD AN AN-24 PLANE BOUND FROM BATUMI TO SUKHUMI: THE BRAZINSKAS, FATHER AND SON, KILLED 19-YEAR-OLD STEWARDESS NADEZHDA KURCHENKO, WOUNDED THREE CREW MEMBERS AND SEIZED CONTROL OF THE PLANE. IN ORDER TO SAVE THE LIVES OF THE PASSENGERS, PILOT SULIKO SHAVIDZE WAS FORCED TO OBEY THE ORDER OF THE MURDERERS AND LAND THE PLANE IN TURKEY.

AS YOU ARE AWARE, INTERNATIONAL CONVENTIONS WERE SIGNED IN THE HAGUE IN DECEMBER 1970 AND IN MONTREAL IN SEPTEMBER 1971 IN THE STRUGGLE AGAINST

AIR PIRACY. A RESOLUTION ADOPTED BY THE 27TH SESSION
OF THE U.N. GENERAL ASSEMBLY (1972), "ON MEASURES
TO PREVENT INTERNATIONAL TERRORISM, WHICH THREATENS
THE LIVES OF INNOCENT PEOPLE", WAS ALSO DIRECTED
AGAINST IT.

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BELGRADE ALSO FOR USDEL CSCE

REPRESENTATIVES OF THE U.S. ALSO SIGNED THESE DOCUMENTS.

A NUMBER OF STATE AND POLITICAL LEADERS
IN YOUR COUNTRY, WITHOUT SPARING WORDS IN PUBLIC
SPEECHES, HAVE CALLED FOR AN END TO PIRATICAL ATTACKS
IN THE AIR, CALLING THEM "THE EVIL OF OUR TIME." BUT

AT THE SAME TIME, THE BRAZINSKAS, WHO ARE MURDERERS,
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EVADING RESPONSIBILITY, REMAIN AT LARGE.

ON JUNE 25, 1976, TURKISH NEWSPAPERS PUBLISHED
A REPORT OF THE "ESCAPE" OF THE BRAZINSKAS FROM
YOZGATE CAMP, AND SEVERAL DAYS LATER INFORMED THE WORLD

OF THE APPEAL OF THE "FUGITIVES" TO U.S. AUTHORITIES
FOR ASYLUM. AS THE WESTERN PRESS HAS MADE KNOWN,
HAVING RECEIVED AN OFFICIAL REFUSAL, THEY FLEW FROM
TURKEY "TOWARDS SOUTH AMERICA" AND THEN, HAVING APPEARED
AT THE NEW YORK AIRPORT, "LOST THEMSELVES IN THE
CROWD" (?) AND... REMAINED IN THE U.S.

ON JULY 15, 1976 THE SOVIET GOVERNMENT MADE AN
OFFICIAL STATEMENT THAT "THE BRAZINSKAS CRIMINALS,
WHEREVER THEY MAY BE, ARE SUBJECT TO EXTRADITION TO
THE SOVIET UNION", WHICH "REGARDS THEIR HARBORING AS
AN UNFRIENDLY ACT TOWARD THE USSR." BUT EVEN AFTER
THIS THE PIRATICAL MURDERERS VIOLATORS OF US

IMMIGRATION LAWS, WERE NOT EXTRADITED.

DISPROVING THE VERSION OF "UNAUTHORIZED ENTRY
INTO THE US" DISSEMINATED BY "NAIVE" JOURNALISTS, THE
ELDER BRAZINSKAS SETTLED IN NEW YORK CITY, THE YOUNGER
IN WORCESTER, MASSACHUSETTS, AND AS EVENTS PROVED THEY

MADE NO SECRET OF THEIR STAY IN YOUR COUNTRY. AFTER
THE MARRIAGE OF THE YOUNGER BRAZINSKAS, THE MURDERERS
REPEATEDLY VISITED OFFICES OF THE IMMIGRATION SERVICE,
DEMANDING EMPLOYMENT.

ON MARCH 28 OF THIS YEAR S. SHAVIDZE AND O. BABAYAN,

BABAYAN, FORMER CREWMEMBERS OF THE AN-24 WHICH HAD
BEEN SUBJECTED TO ATTACK, SENT THROUGH THE AMERICAN
EMBASSY IN MOSCOW A LETTER ADDRESSED TO YOU REQUESTING
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EXTRADITION OF THE CRIMINALS TO SOVIET JUDICIAL
ORGANS. IN THE WHITE HOUSE REPLY IT WAS REPORTED
THAT THE BRAZINSKAS WERE REFUSED POLITICAL ASYLUM
IN THE US BECAUSE THEY HAD COMMITTED A "GRAVE

POLITICAL CRIME", AND IT WAS ALSO STATED THAT THE
PIRATES MIGHT BE EXPELLED TO VENEZUELA. THIS REPLY
BY OFFICIAL FUNCTIONARIES LEADS ONE TO THINK THAT

IN THEIR VIEW VENEZUELA IS NOT A SOVEREIGN STATE, BUT SOME SORT OF PRISON SUCH AS GREEN HAVEN, NEW NEW YORK.

SUCH AN ANSWER DISHEARTENED NOT ONLY US, SOVIET CITIZENS, FRIENDS AND COLLEAGUES OF THE VICTIMS, BUT ALSO THE DIRECTOR OF INTERPOL IN CARACAS, CESAR KERO MORALES, WHO TOLD CORRESPONDENTS THAT HE KNEW NOTHING ABOUT SUCH A DEPORTATION WHICH, HOWEVER, HE CONSIDERED IMPOSSIBLE IN VIEW OF THE FACT THAT THE BRAZINSKAS ARE NOT CITIZENS OF VENEZUELA.

YOU WILL AGREE THAT THE ANSWER BY WHITE HOUSE FUNCTIONARIES COULD NOT HELP BUT MAKE US DOUBT THAT YOU WERE GENERALLY INFORMED ABOUT THE EVIL DEEDS OF THE BRAZINSKAS, THAT YOU HAD READ THE LETTER FROM S. SHAVIDZE AND O. BABAYAN AND THAT YOU KNEW OF THE ANSWER SENT IN YOUR NAME. FOR THE ANSWER COMPLETELY FAILS TO ACCORD WITH THE PASSIONATE WORDS OF YOUR FRIENDS IN THE DEMOCRATIC PARTY ON THE NEED TO ELIMINATE AIR PRIACY.

IN 1976 SENATOR MANSFIELD, IN CALLING FOR "THE ADOPTION OF DECISIVE MEASURES" AGAINST THOSE WHO COMMIT PIRATICAL ATTACKS IN THE AIR, SAID: "THE TIME HAS COME TO TAKE SUCH MEASURES THAT NOT ONE PARTICIPANT IN AN ATTEMPT TO STEAL AN AIRPLANE REMAINS UNPUNISHED." DEMOCRAT MANSFIELD DEMANDS, AND QUITE JUSTIFIABLY, PUNISHMENT EVEN FOR ATTEMPTED HIJACKING OF AIRPLANES. AND HE IS NOT ALONE IN HIS DEMANDS. ACCORDING TO PRESS REPORTS, THE DEMOCRATIC LIMITED OFFICIAL USE

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PARTY CONGRESS APPLAUDED A SPEAKER WHO STATED: "WE REJECT THE IDEA THAT OUR COUNTRY HAS TO SIT WITH FOLEED HANDS WHILE TERRORISTS MUTILATE AND KILL COMPLETELY INNOCENT MEN, WOONEN AND CHILDREN."

IN THIS MATTER REPUBLICANS ARE IN COMPLETE AGREEMENT WITH DEMOCRATS.

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THE DELAY IN HANDING THE BRAZINSKAS OVER TO
SOVIET JUDICIAL ORGANS IS PARTICULARLY OUTRAGEOUS
IN LIGHT OF THE FACT THAT THE IMMIGRATION SERVICE
IS RESTRAINED FROM LEGAL ACTIONS WITH RESPECT TO
THEM BY BISHOP VICENTAS BRIZGIS, ACTIVE ACCOMPLICE
OF THE HITLERITES, WHO IN AUGUST 1941 ORGANIZED THE
MURDER OF JEWS LIVING IN THE SMALL TOWN OF KRAKES,
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KODAYSKIY RAYON, LITHUANIAN SSR, AND GAINED THE
SINISTER NICKNAME OF THE "GESTAPO PASTOR." ONE
SUCH CRIME IS ENOUGH FOR THE U.S. IMMIGRATION
SERVICE TO HAVE CONCERNED ITSELF WITH THE PERSON
OF BRIZGIS HIMSELF, BUT IN FACT ONE HANGMAN-EXECUTIONER
SAVES ANOTHER CRIMINAL. ONE WOULD NOT LIKE TO THINK
THAT THIS REPRESENTS IMPLEMENTATION OF THE NOTORIOUS
"HUMAN RIGHTS" AMERICAN-STYLE AND AN ILLUSTRATION OF
HOW THE PRINCIPLES OF "CHRISTIAN MORALITY" ARE
UNDERSTOOD.

SUCH, MR. PRESIDENT, ARE THE CIRCUMSTANCES
OF THE BRAZINSKAS CASE. AS YOU SEE, ATTEMPTS TO

TRANSFORM THEM INTO "GOOD PIRATES", "WORTHY" OF
THE PROTECTION OF US AUTHORITIES, ARE GROUNDLESS.

AFTER THE INAUGURATION CEREMONY YOU AND
MEMBERS OF YOUR FAMILY WENT ON FOOT FROM THE CAPITOL
TO THE WHITE HOUSE, CONTRARY TO CUSTOM, THUS
DEMONSTRATING A DESIRE NOT TO BE SEPARATED FROM THE
PEOPLE, TO EMPHASIZE YOUR UNITY WITH THEM. SO WITH
THE EXAMPLE OF BRAZINSKAS CASE, DRAW THE PROPER
CONCLUSION ABOUT WHAT IS TRULY PROFITABLE AND NECESSARY
FOR THE AMERICAN PEOPLE. USE YOUR POWER TO END
THE ARBITRARINESS OF THE OPPONENTS OF DETENTE, WHO
MAKE THE US A SOURCE OF INSTABILITY IN THE WORLD,
WHICH WORKS AGAINST THE INTERESTS OF THE AMERICAN
AND OTHER PEOPLES. REMEMBER THAT THE SOVIET PEOPLE,
WHICH ALONG WITH THE AMERICAN PEOPLE
DEFEATED HITLERITE FASCISM, PLACED IN THE PARK OF
THE CITY OF SUKHUMI A MONUMENT TO THE WONDERFUL
DAUGHTER OF THE UKRAINIAN PEOPLE, NADYA KURCHENKO,
WHO CARRIED OUT TO THE END HER PATRIOTIC AND OFFICIAL
DUTY. FROM HER HIGH PEDESTAL SHE ASKS THE LIVING:
CAN IT BE THAT THIS CRIME WILL REMAIN UNPUNISHED?
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IN READING THESE LINES, REMEMBER THAT NADYA
KURCHENKO HAD ONLY STARTED OUT IN LIFE. SHE WAS
THE SAME AGE AS YOUR SON JAMES, AND AS A FATHER
YOU MUST UNDERSTAND ALL THE INHUMANITY OF PEOPLE
WHO, IN CONTRADICTION TO THE NORMS OF CRIMINAL AND
INTERNATIONAL LAW, IN DEFIANCE OF CONSCIENCE AND
MORALITY, HELP THE BRAZINSKAS AVOID PUNISHMENT.

IN FINISHING THIS LETTER WE, FLIGHT SERVICE
PERSONNEL OF THE UKRAINIAN CIVIL AVIATION ADMINISTRATION,
CALL UPON YOU TO TURN OVER TO THE USSR THE CRIMINALS,
THE BRAZINSKAS, WHO MUST ANSWER FOR THEIR EVIL DEED.

THIS LETTER HAS BEEN DISCUSSED AND ADOPTED AT
MEETINGS OF COLLECTIVES OF FLIGHT SERVICE PERSONNEL
OF THE BORISPOL', KIEV, ODESSA AND L'VOV AIRPORTS.
A TOTAL OF 344 PERSONS SIGNED THE LETTER.

ON INSTRUCTIONS FROM PARTICIPANTS IN THE MEETINGS
OF THE FLIGHT SERVICE PERSONNEL OF THE UKRAINIAN CIVIL
AVIATION ADMINISTRATION.

5 OCTOBER 1977

SIGNATURES

END TEXT.

TOON

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Message Attributes

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